
Title: The Samurai

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The samurai were fighting men, skilled in the martial arts. Samurai had extensive skills in the use of the bow and arrow and the sword. They could just as likely have killed you with their bare hands. Samurai were also great horsemen.

These warriors were men who lived by Bushido; it was their way of life. The samurai's loyalty to the emperor and his overlord, or daimyo, was unsurpassed. They were trustworthy and honest. They lived frugal lives with no interest in riches and material things, but rather they were interested in honor and pride. They were men of true valor. Samurai had no fear of death. They would enter any battle no matter the odds. To die in battle would only bring honor to one's family and one's lord.

Samurai usually would rather fight alone, one on one. In battle a samurai would call out his family name, rank and accomplishments. Then he would seek out an opponent with similar rank and do battle. When the samurai has killed his opponent he severs his head. After battle he takes the heads of his enemies back to show

proof of his victory.
Heads of generals and
those of high ranks were
transported back to the
capital and displayed for
the officials and others.
The only way out for a
defeated samurai was
death or ritual suicide:
seppuku.

Seppuku-or
disembowelment or
hara-kiri (belly slicing)-is
when a samurai stabs a
knife into his abdomen
and literally disembowels
himself by cutting out his
guts.

After the samurai
disembowels himself
another samurai, usually a
kinsman or friend, slices
his head off. This form
of suicide was performed
under various
circumstances: to avoid
capture in battle, which
the samurai did not
believe to be dishonorable
and degrading, but
generally bad policy; to
atone for a misdeed or
unworthy act; and perhaps
most interestingly, to
admonish one's lord.
A samurai would rather
kill himself than bring
shame and disgrace to his
family name and his lord.
This was considered an
act of true honor.